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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2259  
RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI 0042  
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 0074  
RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY 0001  
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 0013  
INFO RUEHDL/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY 0061  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0025

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ATHENS 001089

SIPDIS

STATE ALSO FOR H AND RM/F/DFS/FO/AA/CAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AFIN](#) [GR](#) [OREP](#)

SUBJECT: CODEL COSTELLO - GREECE (AUGUST 2-3)

1. Embassy Athens warmly welcomes the visit of CODEL Costello to Souda Bay, Crete, Greece, on August 2-3.

2. Embassy Athens Administrative POC for CODEL Costello is: Bill Murad, Public Diplomacy Officer  
Office: 30-210-720-2298  
Cell: 30-6948-601-961  
Home: 30-210-725-5605  
Fax: 30-210-720-2858  
Email: MuradEW at state.gov, Eshel7 at aol.com  
CODEL schedule information is being provided via e-mail.

3. The Embassy has confirmed reservation at Perle Hotel  
Stavros Akrotiriou  
Chania, Crete  
Phone: 30-282-103-9400  
Fax: 30-282-103-9650  
Single: 85 euro (\$133.86)  
Double: 110 euro (\$173.23)  
Rates include breakfast and are not changeable after Thursday, July 31, 2008. Billing will be direct through Embassy and charged to fund cite.

The Embassy will provide expeditor assistance upon arrival and departure.

4. VISA Requirements: Diplomatic and official passport holders must have Greek diplomatic visas, a valid Schengen visa or diplomatic ID from any other Schengen country, in addition to their passport, in order to enter Greece. The Embassy will be unable to obtain planeside visas for USG employees arriving in Greece without proper documentation. Holders of tourist passports do not require visas for a stay up to 90 days only.

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THREAT ASSESSMENT  
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5. Embassy Athens is designated "high" for indigenous terrorism. In the past, local Greek terrorist groups have targeted prominent Greeks as well as certain non-Greek Officials, including Americans. We believe that the threat to official US Government personnel on short-term assignments to Greece or visiting for tourism is relatively low. The indigenous groups historically have engaged in extensive operational surveillance over long periods of time. In 2003 and again in 2004, the Greek Government made significant progress to combat domestic terrorism by successfully convicting the leader and key hit men of the November 17 terrorist organization and of the ELA. 17N was responsible for assassinating prominent Greeks and five members of the US Mission over the course of its 30-year history. Convicted ELA members were responsible for several bombings, attempted murders and were involved in at least one assassination. While these convictions likely impacted on the operational capabilities of 17N and ELA, it is too soon to assess whether the threat from domestic terrorism is completely eliminated. There have been several attacks against Greek police over the last year, including the December 2004 assassination of a special police guard in front of the residence of the British military attache. We urge vigilance and caution, as the worldwide threterrorist groups againse protestst protests or demonstrations could occur at any time; unwitting observers or bystanders might be identified, to

their disadvantage, as Americans. RSO recommends that official U.S. travelers in Greece remain alert when moving about in public places and avoid certain places where demonstrators frequently congregate. These places include the Polytechnical University area, located on 28 October (Patission) Street between the National Archeological Museum and Omonia Square; Exarchion Square, located near Kolonaki; Omonia and Syntagma Squares, which are often used as launch sites for large demonstrations; and Mavili Square, located near the U.S. Embassy. Visitors should keep abreast of news about large demonstrations and avoid these areas and metro stops.

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Crime is rated "medium" in Greece. For TDY visitors, pick pocketing and purse snatching are the most common crimes. Taxis are generally safe though metered cabs are recommended. Taxis too will often pick up more than one passenger unless prior arrangements are made. Crimes of opportunity ) thefts, break-ins, and occasional scams ) are on the rise. Travelers should be especially cautious with wallets, purses, and parcels when traveling on crowded streets, public buses, trolleys, and/or subways. There have been several instances of motorcyclists approaching cars stuck in traffic, reaching through open windows or smashing closed ones, and stealing whatever is within reach. We have also recently learned of a new method in which motorcyclists open the trunk of a vehicle and remove the contents. Security recommends keeping purses, parcels, handbags, etc. out of sight under the seat or on the floor of the car. Windows should be kept closed and doors locked. Pedestrians may also be confronted by beggars and other street people who may attempt to divert attention, then steal unprotected valuables ) either by pick pocketing or snatch-and-grab techniques. Women are generally safe from violent crime in Greece. Men are aggressive by American standards however when pursuing women.

SPECKHARD